

DOCTRINE OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Let Virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy Confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the Doctrine of the Priesthood shall Distil upon thy soul as the Dews from Heaven. (D & C 121:45)

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THE MATRIARCHAL PRIESTESSHOOD

AS

ESTABLISHED

BY THE

PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

IN

THE HOLY ORDER AT NAUVOO

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INTRODUCTION

The question of women and their rights to the Priesthood is a predominant issue in our day and age. In this regard a study into the life and teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith is both fruitful and revealing. Indeed, according to the record which has been left to us, the Prophet did teach that in a given set of circumstances, a woman would be entitled to an ordination to the Priesthood by the laying on of hands, just the same as a man. But just how much

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WILLIAM S. HARWELL

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held in Salt Lake City.*

As man is God once was, as God is man may become. What a wondrous thought, what a glorious opportunity for mankind—to become as God is! To reign supremely over worlds without end! Our Father in Heaven has given His children a promise that those who receive the Fullness of His Gospel and endure to the end, shall receive exaltation in His presence. They shall enter the Celestial Kingdom as Gods and Goddesses, sons and daughters of God in His Celestial Family. A kingdom in which our Heavenly Father eternally rules, and ruling by His side is our Heavenly Mother. It is a patriarchal society comprised of immortal beings, Kings and Priests, Queens and Priestesses who have earned the right to preside over their own eternal posterity, to create worlds without number, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

The Bible is a history of a special family here on Earth. A royal lineage chosen by God upon whom He bestowed his choicest blessings. The Prophet Joseph Smith revealed that this ancient people possessed the fullness of the gospel and a fullness of the priesthood and its ordinances.

From the days of Adam to Moses, it was a patriarchal era, a time in which the patriarchs reigned. It began with Adam, who received certain authority from God.^{1, a} This authority or the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood enabled Adam to administer the fullness of the everlasting Gospel, giving laws and administering endless lives to his sons and daughters.^b Being “the Firstborn”^c he established a patriarchal birthright line, the presiding office of which was referred to as “The right of the Firstborn.”² In Adam’s absence or death, his patriarchal heir who held this Right, stood in Adam’s place as presiding Patriarch to the world. The “Right of the Firstborn” was handed down from father to son^d and could only be held by one

¹The Prophet referred to Adam as “the Ancient of Days”, which according to modern day Bible scholars is an epithet for God. He further stated: “He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and *presides over the spirits of all men*, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council. . . . The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as *holding the keys of the universe*, but retains his standing as *head of the human family*.” (TPJS 157; see also Daniel 7:9–14; TPJS 190) This is an obvious allusion to the Adam-God doctrine which Brigham Young announced to the world in 1852. President Young claimed he was taught this doctrine by the Prophet Joseph Smith. On 4 April 1860 he stated: “*It was Joseph’s doctrine that Adam was God*. . . . [but] Joseph could not reveal what was revealed to him, and if Joseph had it revealed, he was not told to reveal it.” Again on 14 May 1876 he stated, “*Joseph said that Adam was our Father and God*, and if the people did but know it, [Joseph] himself being a leader, he too was their God.” (“President Brigham Young’s Doctrine on Deity”, *Doctrine of the Priesthood* Vol. 5 No. 1, p. 107, Vol. 4 No. 3, p. 31; for a complete overview of this doctrine see *Doctrine of the Priesthood* Vol. 8 No. 1 “New Light on the Ancient Hebrew/Christian Doctrine on Deity”)

²In Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar he explains what the right of the firstborn is: “Ba eth Kee the next from Adam, one one (sic) ordained under him, a patriarch or the *right of the first born*.” (*Doctrine of the Priesthood* Vol. 5 No. 10, “Joseph Smith’s Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language”, p. 17) ^aTPJS 169 ^bTPJS 322 ^cAbraham 1:3 ^dD&C 86:7–11; 107:40–57; 110:12; 113:5–8; 124:56–58; Moses 6:7; Abraham 1:2–4, 25–27, 31; 2:8–11

man on the earth at a time.³ This was the Patriarchal Order or as it came to be known “The Holy Order of God.”

It was in this order that a man and woman received the ordinances of the Priesthood which prepared them for Godhood and which would ultimately bring them into the presence of God. The integral part of this Priesthood was the sealing power—it had the power to seal on earth that which would remain sealed in heaven. It was through this sealing power that eternal marriages and eternal families were created. This power was had on the Earth until the children of Israel upon their release from Egyptian bondage rejected this higher gospel. They sinned against the Lord and the Lord withdrew the Holy Order and the Priesthood thereof⁴ and so ended the reign of the Patriarchs.

Centuries later with the advent of Jesus Christ, Israel had the opportunity to regain all that they had lost. Jesus had the fullness of his Father’s gospel and the keys to administer its ordinances. He received the sealing keys or the Fullness of the Patriarchal Priesthood on the Mount of Transfiguration.⁵

³The Right of the Firstborn was given to Joseph Smith (see D&C 132:7) for he had received the Birthright (see D&C 110:12; 124:57–58; 132:30–31). He declared that he stood as God to the people: “If God made Aaron to be *the* mouth piece *for* [Moses unto] *the Children of Israel* and [Moses to be their God] (Exodus 4:16), He will make me to be *their King* and *their God* in *His* stead, and they *the Elders* [of] Israel *to* be mouth for me, and if you don’t like it, you must lump it.” (New Amalgamated Text of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s, April 8th, 1844 Conference Address, to be published in a forth coming issue of *Doctrine of the Priesthood*; see also *WJS* 362–365; *HC* 6:318–320; *TPJS* 362–363)

⁴The Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible records this incident: “And the Lord said unto Moses hew thee two other tables of stone, like unto the first . . . but it shall not be according to the first, for *I will take away the priesthood* out of their midst; *therefore my holy order, and the ordinances thereof*, shall not go before them; for my presence shall not go up in their midst, lest I destroy them.” (*JST* Exodus 34:1; see also D&C 84:19–25) The nation of Israel rejected the higher priesthood with its laws and ordinances. Instead of becoming a nation of Kings and Priests to God, the Lord stripped them of all their priestly authority and left them with a law of carnal commandments. They were governed by the Aaronic priesthood which only the Levites could hold. Israel rejected those ordinances which would have brought them into the presence of God.

⁵Before he received the angelic visitation of Moses and Elias, the Savior speaking in a futuristic tense told Peter his chief apostle, “*I will* give unto thee the

Had Christ and his Apostles not been rejected by the people, the Patriarchal Order would have again been established.⁶ But the Gospel of the Father was rejected and the world was plunged into the dark ages where it remained until 1820 when an unlearned farm boy by the name of Joseph Smith was chosen by the Lord to restore His Gospel. Joseph received first the Aaronic priesthood under the hands of John the Baptist. Later he received the apostolic authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood under the hands of Peter, James and John. Finally he received the higher order of the Patriarchal Priesthood and the fullness thereof from under the hands of Moses, Elias and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple. Thus on the 3rd of April, 1836, Joseph Smith received the same blessings which were given to Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. He was given the sealing keys of Elijah which gave him the authority to seal on earth that which would remain sealed in Heaven.⁶ It was this higher order of the Patriarchal Priesthood (though not its fullness) which the Prophet referred to on August 27, 1843, when he said that: “[the] second Priesthood [is] Abraham’s Patriarchal power which is the *greatest [Priesthood] yet experienced in this Church.*”⁷

The Lord had again brought forth His Holy Order, the Patriarchal Order over which Joseph Smith Jr. stood as the presiding Patriarch, Priest and King.⁸ He stood as God to the people and administered

Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven.” (Matt. 16:19) This is in contrast to the Saviors words after his return from the Mount of Transfiguration: “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye *shall* bind on earth *shall* be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye *shall* loose on earth *shall* be loosed in heaven.” (Matt. 18:18; see also *TPJS* 158)

⁶In Speaking of the Priesthood which Elijah restored, the Prophet told the Saints: “Elijah was the last Prophet that held the keys of the Priesthood, and who will, before the last dispensation, restore the authority and deliver the keys of the Priesthood, in order that all the ordinances may be attended to in righteousness. . . . Why send Elijah? Because he holds the keys of the authority to administer in all the ordinances of the Priesthood; and without the authority is given, the ordinances could not be administered in righteousness.” (*HC* 4:211) “Those holding the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings. In fact, that Priesthood is a perfect law of theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam.” (*TPJS* 322)

⁷*TPBY* Vol. 3:162–164 ⁸*WJS* 245 ⁹*D&C* 132:7

endless lives to them, just as the ancient patriarchs did before him. The Prophet had received the “Right of the Firstborn”—the right to stand as Adam and through this authority he established the “Church of the Firstborn” on Earth!⁷

It was on May 4th, 1842, that the Holy Order met for the first time in this dispensation.^h It was at this meeting that the Prophet first administered the Endowment—the ordinances of the Holy Order and communicated keys pertaining to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood.⁸ Joseph referred to it as the ancient order of things because it was the same order which the ancient patriarchs had—the Patriarchal Order!

It was through the ordinances of the Holy Order that Joseph Smith created his own family kingdom which came to be known as the Council of Fifty. This special council of men were adopted to the Prophet through an oath and a covenant as sons.ⁱ In this Council the Prophet

⁷Heber C. Kimball speaking of the organization of the Church of the Firstborn, told the Saints: “*Let me explain what the **church of the First Born** is. It is the **first Church** that ever was raised up upon this earth; that is, the first born Church. That is what I mean; and when **God our Father** organized that Church, He organized it just as His Father organized the church on the earth where He dwelt; and that same order is organized **here** in the City of Great Salt Lake; and it is that order that **Joseph Smith** the Prophet of God **organized** in the beginning in Kirtland, Ohio. Brother Brigham Young, myself, and others **were present** when that was done; and when **those officers** received their endowments, they were together in one place [in the upper brick store at Nauvoo]. They were organized, and received their **endowments** and blessings, and **those keys** were placed upon them, and that **kingdom** will stand for ever.” (JD 5:129) It should be remembered that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in Fayette, New York not Kirtland, Ohio. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball were not present at this organization as the Gospel had not yet been preached to them.*

⁸Indicating that there is more than one order of the Melchizedek priesthood. The order of priesthood the Prophet is here referring to is the Patriarchal Priesthood which since all priesthood is Melchizedek, it was referred to as a higher order. This priesthood is represented in the Endowment by the Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood. It is through this Priesthood that a man becomes a King and a Priest and a woman becomes a Queen and a Priestess. This power is received by a man and his wife through a series of two anointings. The first gives them the right to preside over their family kingdom in mortality. It is the Second Anointing which confers upon them the sealing keys of Elijah.

^hHC 5:1–2 ⁱFor a complete examination of this doctrine see *Doctrine of the Priesthood*, Vol. 8 No. 4 “Adoption—Law of the Kingdom—Forgotten Doctrine of Mormonism”.

was sustained as presiding Patriarch, Priest and King over all Israel as well as God's entire worldly kingdom.⁹ The Council of Fifty was a priesthood body.¹⁰ In its meetings the members dressed in temple robes and offered up the signs and tokens of the Priesthood. In a revelation to this Council the Lord gave them their name: "Verily thus saith the Lord, This is the name by which you shall be called—The Kingdom of God and His Laws, *with the Keys and power thereof*, and judgment in the hands of his servants, Ahman Christ." (*UPR Part 57a*) The existence of the Council of Fifty was kept a well guarded secret. Its members were sworn to secrecy and its records were well protected. At one point Joseph had them buried to keep them safe.¹¹ The Church as a whole was kept entirely in the dark as to its proceedings, for its secrets could only be revealed through the oaths and covenants of the Temple which were administered to relatively few people during the Prophet's lifetime. Eventually the Prophet hoped to bring every worthy Saint into this order including the women.^j

It was the Prophet's doctrine that the women who were brought into the Holy Order received the Priesthood along with the men. They received their washings and anointings at the hands of other sisters who had already been endowed and who had been anointed and ordained to the Keys of the Priesthood. Sister Eliza R. Snow, wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith made these remarks:

⁹William Clayton in his journal tells of this event: "In this council [i. e. the Council of Fifty] was President Joseph chosen our prophet, priest & King by Hosannas." (William Clayton Diary entry for 1 Jan 1845, see forthcoming issue of *Doctrine of the Priesthood*)

¹⁰Besides Priesthood bearers there were also two Gentile members who were allowed to have a seat and voice on behalf of their constituency. (see *Unpublished Revelations* 81:40–46)

¹¹William Clayton records this in his diary: "Saturday June 22. Joseph whispered and told me either to put the r[ecords] of [the] K[ingdom] into the hands of some faithful man and send them away, or burn them, or bury them. I concluded to bury them, which I did immediately on my return home." (William Clayton Diary entry for 22 June 1844, see forthcoming issue of *Doctrine of the Priesthood*) These records remained in possession of Church leaders and were brought to the Great Salt Lake Valley. Heber J. Grant wrote in his diary that he cried when he read them. They have since been committed to the vault of the First Presidency's office—a legacy of 250 pages of the Prophet Joseph Smith's life which to this day remains a secret in the vault of the First Presidency.

^jHC 5:2

The sisters were also apostolic in a priestly sense. *They partook of the priesthood **equally** with the men.* They too “held the keys of the administration of angels.” . . . Woman also soon became high priestess and prophetess. She was this officially. . . . The genius of *a patriarchal priesthood* naturally made her the apostolic help-meet for man. If you saw her not in the pulpit teaching the congregation, yet was she to be found in the temple, administering for the living and the dead! Even in the holy of holies she was met. As a high priestess she blessed with the laying on of hands! As a prophetess she oracled in holy places! As an endowment giver she was a Mason, of the Hebraic order, whose Grand Master is the God of Israel and whose anointer is the Holy Ghost. *She held the keys* of the administration of angels and of the “*sealings*” pertaining to “*the heavens and the earth*” (*Women of Mormondom* 22–23)

President Brigham Young referred to the fact that women did indeed hold the Priesthood, when in a discourse given on June 28th, 1874, he told the Saints:

Now, brethren, the man that honors his priesthood, *the woman that honors her priesthood*, will receive an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of God. (*JD* 17:119)

On March 15th, 1846, Orson Hyde read and distributed to the Saints in the Nauvoo Temple a revelation which he had received that morning:

I have made my Church as upon a hill. The Priesthood holds the power and all have been ordained or ought to be. It is necessary that it should rest upon all, *not upon men only but upon women also that ye may be all ONE.* Fear not little flock, it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. It is given to you and power to overcome all things. (*Bullock Minutes*, 15 March 1846, *BYU Studies* Vol. 31, No. 1 p. 61)

It was in an address which the Prophet Joseph Smith gave at the first meeting of the “Female Relief Society” on April 28th, 1842 that he first alluded to the fact that he intended to ordain women to all the keys of the priesthood. In the *History of the Church* concerning this occasion he wrote: “At two o’clock I met the members of the ‘Female Relief Society,’ and after presiding at the admission of many new members, gave a lecture on the Priesthood, showing

how the sisters *would come in possession of the privileges, blessings and gifts of the Priesthood.*" (HC 4:602)

Speaking to the sisters "He spoke of *delivering the keys to this society*" (WJS 116). He also said, "that the *keys of the kingdom are about to be given to them*" (WJS 177). The Keys of the Kingdom were about to be delivered to those worthy sisters. They were to be conferred on them in the Nauvoo Temple, the only appropriate place where these ordinances could be properly administered and it was necessary that the women that were brought into the order should possess the Priesthood in order to perform Temple work. That this is so is revealed in a blessing given by Patriarch John Smith to Maria Turnbow on Nov. 7, 1845:

Thou shalt have an Endowment in the Lords house [and] be *clothed with the Power of the Holy Priesthood* [to] be able to redeem thy fathers house back to where they died in the Gospel and bring them up in the first Resurrection (a blessing by John Smith Patriarch upon the head of Maria Louisia Turnbow given in Nauvoo Nov. 7, 1845; recorded in book Dp 464 a. cor)

In another blessing given by Elisha Graves to Lucy Flake, again the necessity of holding the priesthood in order to do temple work is indicated:

thou art a royal heir to all the blessings, privileges and powers which pertain to the Holy Priesthood according to thy sex, *which thou shalt receive* in due time that thou mayest be able to accomplish thy work in behalf of thy progenitors. Thou shalt be connected with a man of God, thru whom *thou shalt receive the priesthood*, exaltation, power and eternal glory, become a mother in Israel. . . . *be anointed a queen and priestess unto the most high God*, receive thy crown, dominion, power and eternal increase, thy inheritance with thy benefactor in Zion. (Life of Lucy Hannah White Flake p. 4-5; blessing given by Elisha H. Graves, Nov. 4th 1856)

Here is a blessing given by Patriarch John Smith to Emily Jacob in 1846:

I place my hands upon thy head in the name of Jesus of Nazareth and *seal upon thee the Priesthood* with all the blessings of the new and everlasting covenant, which was sealed upon the children of Joseph, for this [is] thy lineage, the same as thy companion. *Thou hast a right to all the blessings*

which are sealed upon his head, for a woman can have but little power in the priesthood without a man. (City of Joseph the Record of Norton Jacob pages 16–17; Jan. 26, 1846)

It should also be stated that a man has but little power in the priesthood without a woman. Section 131 of the Doctrine and Covenants states:

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees; and in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this *order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage]*; And if he does not, *he cannot obtain it*. He may enter into the other, *but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase*.

Here is another blessing by Chas. W. Hyde upon the head of Sarah Ann Turnbow:

Thou shalt have the gift of discernment and wisdom that leads to eternal life, great shall be thy reward and understanding for thou art of Joseph and a *lawful heir to the fullness of the priesthood* with [thy] companion and a numerous posterity on the earth. Thou shalt have an inheritance in Zion with all the redeemed and shalt help to redeem thy fathers household. Thou shalt go into the temple of the lord, the place called the Holy of Holy [Holies] and converse with angels and *be ordained a Queen by the hand of your Redeemer* and thy companion a King and Priest. No good thing shall be denied thee, and I seal upon you these blessings of powers, dominions and Eternal lives for ever and ever. Amen. (A blessing by Chas W. Hyde upon the head of Sarah Ann Turnbow; given Feb. 12, 1862)

All these blessings were to be given to the sisters in conjunction with their husbands in the Nauvoo Temple. Only two years before his death, the Prophet stated, “that the Church is not now organized in its proper order, and cannot be until the Temple is completed” (WJS 115). The Church was going through a period of metamorphosis which would have transformed it from the caterpillar of Bishops, Stake Presidents, Apostles and other presiding officers within the Church into the beautiful butterfly of a Celestial family. Joseph was going to make of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints a kingdom of Kings and Priests, Queens and Priestesses to God. They were to become the Royal Family of God on earth over which Joseph Smith stood as the

presiding Patriarch, which office was to be passed down from father to son through a line of the Prophet's birthright heirs until when in the valley of Adam-ondi Ahman, God Himself would return and present the Kingdom to Jesus Christ.^k But all this was not to be, for the Prophet and his brother were murdered before the Temple was finished.

The untimely death of the Prophet and his brother was the most devastating thing which could have happened to the Church. Not only were the saints deprived of their beloved Prophet and Patriarch, but the state of affairs concerning leadership left the Church in the greatest danger of fragmenting and even complete dissolution. William Clayton recorded this crucial time in Church history, "The greatest danger that no[w] threatens us is dissensions and strifes amongst the church. There are already 4 or 5 men pointed out as successors to the Trustee and President & there is danger of feelings being manifest[ed]." (William Clayton Diary July 6th, 1844, see forthcoming issue of *Doctrine of the Priesthood*) The general membership of the Church was completely ignorant of the Prophet's inner family organization and the fact that it was around this Council that succession revolved. The Right of the Firstborn was to be handed down from father to son. It was common knowledge within the Council of Fifty that the Prophet had intended his son Joseph III to be successor to the presidency of the Church and that an unborn son by the name of David would receive the Right of the Firstborn and rise to Joseph's place as presiding Patriarch, Priest and King over the entire Kingdom.¹² Brigham Young at the semi-annual conference of the Church on October 7, 1863 made this remark:

¹²In a revelation received by the Prophet on July 27, 1842, the Prophet was given Sarah Ann Whitney to be his wife and among other things they were told, "All these things I do in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, That through this order he may be glorified and that through the power of anointing David may reign King over Israel, which shall hereafter be revealed." (*UPR* 59) Sarah Ann Whitney did not have the opportunity to bear that son to the Prophet, but after the Prophet's death she was sealed to Heber C. Kimball for time who according to the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage, raised up seed unto Joseph. The first son they had they named David, but he died in infancy. The second son Sarah Ann bore they also named David, but again the child died in infancy. The third son they had they also named David who did live, but did not succeed to the throne.

^k*TPJS* 157; Daniel 7:9–14

Long before his death Joseph said to me, "I shall have a son born to me, and his name shall be called David; and on him, in some future time, will rest the responsibility that now rests upon me." This is Joseph's declaration to me and others, some time before his death. I can produce plenty of witnesses to the truth of this, if necessary. (TPBY 5:10/7/63)

Joseph had indicated that should he die, his brother Hyrum should stand in his place as a guardian for Joseph's children who were not then old enough to take their rightful place as his heirs. The Prophet also indicated that if he and Hyrum were both killed, his brother Samuel Smith was to stand as a guardian for Joseph's children.¹³ But Samuel died just one month after Joseph.

¹³The Prophet's brother Hyrum stood as the Patriarch to the Church, an office which held more authority than even the President of the Church. In the History of the Church Joseph made the following remarks, "[I] Said I would not prophesy any more, and proposed Hyrum to hold the office of prophet to the Church, as it was his birthright. I am going to have a reformation, and the Saints must regard Hyrum, for he has the authority, that I might be a Priest of the Most High God . . . But on account of the unbelief of the people, I cannot reveal the fullness of these things at present." (HC 510) The Church Patriarch stood as a father to the fatherless. He was the connecting link between the Church of Christ and the Church of the Firstborn. Hyrum held this right having received it by revelation from the Lord. He administered to the fatherless gentiles who were being brought into the Church, giving them their patriarchal blessings and introducing them to the Patriarchal Order. It was this very office that, upon the death of the Prophet, many of those involved in the succession crisis were vying for. William Clayton, the prophet's personal scribe recorded this in his journal: "Joseph has said that if he and Hyrum were taken away Samuel H. Smith would be his successor." (William Clayton Diary 12 July 1844) After Joseph's death, Clayton recorded the Prophet's mother saying, "Mother Smith wants Samuel to move into Nauvoo and take the Patriarch's office and says the Church ought to support him." (William Clayton Diary 2 July 1844) William Smith the Prophet's brother also purported to be the head over all the Church by virtue of the office of Church Patriarch. Of William Smith, William Clayton wrote: "There is more danger from William than from any other source and I fear his course will bring us much trouble . . . It appears *he is determined to rule the Church and monopolize the whole to himself*." (Diary of William Clayton 23 May 1845) In a letter to Brigham Young who was by then in control of the Church, William Smith wrote: "it was my wish that you should stand as the President of the church, *but I claim to be patriarch over the whole church* . . . this will give me a right to visit all branches of the church and intrude on no mans rights, and further, *to attend to all of the ordinances of God, no man being my head*, I will reconcile all difficulties and

Brigham Young was a member of the Council of Fifty, and knew as did everyone in the Council that he had not been appointed by the Prophet as his successor. President Young told the Saints:

The brethren testify that brother Brigham is brother Joseph's legal successor. You never heard me say so. I say that I am a good hand to keep the dogs and wolves out of the flock. I do not care a groat who rises up. I do not think anything about being Joseph's successor. That is nothing that concerns me. (*JD* 8:69)

Here President Young indicates that he too was merely a guardian for the Church until Joseph Smith's true successor should come forth. In speaking of Joseph's children he said:

What of Joseph Smith's family? What of his boys I have prayed from the beginning for sister Emma and for the whole family. There is not a man in this Church that has entertained better feelings towards them. Joseph said to me, "God will take care of my children when I am taken." They are in the hands of God, and when they make their appearance before this people, full of His power, there are none but what will say—"Amen! we are ready to receive you." (*JD* 8:69)

But Joseph's children never did come forth. Joseph the 3rd became President of the Reorganized Church and was the foremost opponent to the LDS Church and the doctrines his father had taught during the Nauvoo period. David later came to Utah where he was convinced that his father actually did live plural marriage. He was later institutionalized and never did claim any rights to succession.

It was the Prophet's mission to establish the Kingdom of God on Earth — it was a family kingdom. Its powers were vested in the King and Queen, the anointed husband and wife. In this order the parents literally stand as God and Goddess to their own family kingdom. The Prophet Joseph had chosen for his Queen the elect lady Emma — just as Joseph stood as Adam, Emma stood as Eve. She was the first woman received into the Holy Order and the first woman to be

Elder Young can stand as the president of the church, and by my most hearty wish and consent." (William Clayton Diary June 28th, 1844) William Smith never did rise to power in the Church and although given the patriarch's office he eventually was excommunicated from the Church and died in obscurity.

ordained to the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood. She was to be the mother of the Prophet's birthright heir, the David who would receive from the Prophet the Right of the Firstborn and would rule in his stead as Adam or God to the people. When this son became of age, he would have taken his father's place as King/Priest over the kingdom — the Presiding Patriarch. At that point, even his mother would have been subject to him, for he would have stood as Adam with no mortal being at his head. Emma would have retained her standing as Queen and Eve over the kingdom — all would have been subject to her except her son who had received the Right of the Firstborn. However his authority over her would be in mortality only, for in the Celestial Kingdom he would again be subject to his parents.

At the Prophet's death, had Emma been worthy to receive it, she would have presided over the kingdom as presiding Matriarch, High Priestess, Queen, Goddess and Eve. Even Brigham Young would have been subject to her — she would have been his Mother, Queen and Goddess! Speaking of Emma, Brigham Young said, "I know what Emma believes, and have known it all the day long; and yet there is not that woman on earth that I would delight to honor more, with the whole family, if they would let me do it." (TPBY 5:10/7/63) On another occasion Brigham said, "I never saw a day in the world that I would not almost worship that woman, Emma Smith, if she would be a saint instead of being a devil . . . there is no good thing I would refuse to do for her, if she would only be a righteous woman." (TPBY 6:10/1/66)

Had Emma been one with her husband, at his death she would have stood as Goddess to the people, not as the Prophet's birthright heir, but by virtue of her elect status as Mother, Queen, Goddess and Eve. It was the Prophet's hope that Emma would have grown into her position as Queen over the Kingdom for she was indeed a very special soul to him. Given time it is quite probable that she would have become converted to the whole doctrine of the Kingdom and would have risen to her full potential as the Prophet's Queen. However at the death of the Prophet we find Emma backsliding. She rejected many of the Prophet's teachings especially polygamy and she leagued herself with Sidney Rigdon and William Marks.¹⁴

¹⁴William Clayton's diary for July 4th, 1844 states: "P.M. in council with brothers Marks, Cutler and Cahoon at Marks' house. It seemed manifest to us that brother Marks' place is to be appointed president and Trustee in Trust and

As President Smith's first councillor, Rigdon was one of the strongest contenders for the Presidency. Rigdon's plan was that he should be guardian for the Church and Marks would be the Patriarch.¹⁵ Emma was the kingpin in Rigdon's plan, because he knew as did all those who had been involved in the Prophet's secret organization that it was Emma's sons whom the Prophet had designated as his successors. Rigdon wanted to be guardian to the Church, until Emma's sons were old enough to take control. In the eyes of the general membership of the Church, Sidney Rigdon seemed to be the logical choice to succeed the Prophet.

Brigham Young was highly influential as President of the Quorum of Twelve and member of the Council of Fifty. But Emma did not like Brigham Young who stood for Joseph's doctrines especially polygamy. She knew that Brigham Young would fight against her. Hence Emma's greatest chance to gain ascendancy in the Church was to join forces with Sidney Rigdon and William Marks. Marks who was the highly influential President of the entire Nauvoo Stake, also opposed Joseph's doctrines. These three created a formidable force, and had their plans succeeded, they would have indeed destroyed the spiritual blessings of the Church.

this accords with Emma's feelings." Clayton feared that if Marks gained power over the Church, he would destroy it: "Friday 12th. . . . P.M. . . . As I returned to dinner brother Whitney came down with me and stated his feelings about Marks being appointed Trustee. He referred me to the fact of **Marks being with Law and Emma in opposition to Joseph and the Quorum** [i.e. the Holy Order] — and if Marks is appointed Trustee *our spiritual blessings will be destroyed* inasmuch as he is not favorable to the most important matters. The Trustee must of necessity be the first president of the Church and Joseph has said that if he and Hyrum were taken away Samuel H. Smith would be his successor."

¹⁵William Clayton's diary for August 7th, 1844 states: "Wednesday 7th . . . Brother Cutler said that in the council yesterday he drew out from [William] Marks that *Sidney Rigdon was to be president and Marks patriarch.*"

The Nov. 30, 1844 Nauvoo High Council Minutes reports that "Councillor A. Cutler arose and stated that Elder S. Rigdon came to him on the morning that he arrived in Nauvoo from Pittsburg, and saluted him very cordially, stated his joy to see him and told him that he (Cutler) was to become a great man in the Kingdom; and Elder W[illia]m Marks also said to him that *he himself, was to be head Patriarch over the whole Church.*

There can be little doubt that Emma knew of her rights to leadership and that she expressed her views to those around her. Benjamin F. Johnson was the Prophet's brother in law, business partner and intimate friend. As the Saints were preparing to leave Nauvoo he along with Bishop Newell K. Whitney were commissioned by the Council of Fifty to see Emma to try and persuade her to join the saints. Benjamin F. Johnson related his experience with Emma on three separate occasions. The first is from his auto-biography:

At the last meeting of the Council [of Fifty] . . . I was appointed with Bp. N[ewell] K. Whitney, to visit Sister Emma for the last time, and if possible persuade her to remain with the Church. Nearly all night we labored with her, and all we could learn was, that *she was willing to go with the Church on condition she could be the leading Spirit*. And so we left her. And she did lead all who would follow her so long as she lived. (A Life Review by Benjamin F. Johnson, manuscript copy, p. 86–104)

In a letter to Frank Feely, Brother Johnson made this statement:

I . . . with the presiding Bishop N[ewell] K. Whitney, was called as a committee on the 5th of February — '46 to visit young Joseph's [i.e. Joseph III] mother . . . we labored with her near one whole night, but left her inflexible in the idea of *her own right to be principal as leader of the Church*. (Benjamin F. Johnson Letter to Frank Feely, dated December 10th, 1897, John M. Whitaker Papers, Special Collections, University of Utah Library)

Another statement of Benjamin F. Johnson to the Deseret News:

by request of the [Council of Fifty,] Presiding Bishop, N[ewell] K. Whitney and myself spent almost a whole night in seeking to persuade this mother, the Prophet's wife [Emma] to accompany us in going West. She well knew that myself and many others had plural wives, to which she made no objection. And could her one great question: "***Can I be Leader of the Church***" have been answered affirmatively, all would have been right with her. (Benjamin F. Johnson letter to Editor of the *Deseret News*, dated June 25th, 1902, BFJ papers, CHO)

The Twelve and other members of the Council of Fifty knew of the importance that Emma and her children played in the succession dilemma. While Brigham Young was being transfigured in the

conference held with the Saints on the morning of August 8, 1844, his right hand man, Heber C. Kimball, instead of lending support to Brigham Young's fight against Sidney Rigdon, went along with William Phelps and William Clayton to see Emma to try to buy her over to their side by giving her 1000 dollars. Clayton reports: "Thursday 8th. A.M. I went to Council with the Twelve. Brother Kimball concluded to pay the \$1000 to Emma. I went home to get it . . . I then went with brothers Kimball and Richards to see Emma. K[imball] paid her the \$1000 and bore testimony to her of the good feelings of the Twelve towards her. She seemed humble and more kind." (William Clayton Diary, 8 July 1844) Yet it was only five days later that Emma made her stand against the Twelve. William Clayton wrote in his diary of an interview he had with her, "Emma . . . talked much about trustees being appointed and says if he is not a man she approves of she will do the church all the injury she can by keeping the lots which are in her name."¹⁶ (William Clayton Diary, July 13, 1844) Emma was not about to come under the dominion of Brigham Young or the Twelve. She knew it was her right to be Queen and by using Rigdon as a figure head she could pull the strings until her children became of age.

But all Rigdon's and Emma's hopes for power in the Church were dashed on August 8th 1844, when during a speech given before a vast congregation of the Saints in Nauvoo, Brigham Young stood transfigured before them. Those who witnessed it said that Brigham

¹⁶One month later it seems Emma's disposition remained unchanged. William Clayton reports: "[August] Thursday 15th. . . . I then went to see Emma. I found her alone and began to talk to her and tell her what I thought Woods intended to do. She grew warm and said that all the business of the Trustee must be presented. We had no secrets that we must keep back from the public for she was determined to have every thing settled now. I replied to her that there were many things which I was unwilling the world should know any thing about and should not lend my hand to ruin the Church. She then grew more angry and said I had neglected her and the business, and there was nothing that had President Smith's name to that should not be investigated. She said she had no secrets nor any thing she was unwilling the whole world should know. I told her that there was some things which [I] would be unwilling the public should know. She denied it. I said I knew things that she did not want the world to know. She said if I harbor'd any idea that she had ever done wrong it was false. I answered, "What I have seen with my eyes and heard

Young took on the form of Joseph Smith. He looked like him and sounded like him even down to the whistle which the prophet had because of a broken tooth he had sustained in a fight with a mob. Clearly the Prophet had placed his shoes on Brigham Young, not as his successor, but as President Young put it “a good hand to keep the dogs and wolves out of the flock.” (*JD* 8:69)

It has been said that Brigham Young stood for Joseph’s measures and no doubt at the Prophet’s death he was the most qualified to lead the Saints. But this notwithstanding, it is nonetheless a fact that Brigham Young did not successfully follow through with all

with my ears I could believe.” She said, if I said she had ever committed a crime I was a liar and I knew it. I replied, “Sister Emma I know I don’t lie and you know better what I know I know and although I never have told it to any soul on earth nor never intend to yet it is still the truth and I shall not deny it.” She then several times called me a liar and said she knew I was her enemy and she never had been so abused in all her life. I told her I was not her enemy nor never had been. She said I neglected her and spent my time in the secret council of the Twelve and it was secret things which had cost Joseph and Hyrum their lives and says she, “I prophecy that it will cost you and the Twelve your lives as it has done them.” She repeated this two or three times in a threatening manner, and said it in a manner that I understood that she intended to make it cost us our lives as she had done by President Smith. I told her that I would rather die than do any thing to ruin the Church. She raged very hard and used many sever threats and told me that she had now proved that I was an enemy to her and she did not want such persons about her to do business. I coolly replied that I was her friend and she would prove it so and I had done nothing but what I felt perfectly willing to meet her and Joseph together and answer for it. I also tried to show her that she had misinterpreted my words for I did not mean what she said I did. I told her I had run at her call night or day whenever I could get a chance and have suffered abuses which I never would have born from any other woman in the world. She would not listen to any thing I could say and I left her. I still feel to befriend her all I can, but she will now try to destroy my character and influence no doubt, but I have no enmity towards her and am determined I will not given way to it. She is blind as to her best interest and those who are her best friends, she is the most bitter against. She is cherishing and putting her life into the hands of traitors and murderers and they will use her up; for she will not listen to the advise of her friends nor be at peace with those who wish to do her good. I feel to pray that God will soften her heart and shew her the danger she is exposing herself to and to bind her up that she may not have power to destroy thy servants O God. I went and told President Young the whole circumstances and he told me to fear not, but rejoice.”

of Joseph's measures. Because of the unwillingness of the people,^l when the Prophet died, the higher laws and doctrines of the Kingdom which had only just barely been instituted began to die away. The Council of Fifty, Joseph Smith's family kingdom, began to be dissolved at his death, they did not meet again for eight months. It was not until Brigham Young held the reins of power tightly in his hand that he called a meeting of the Council of Fifty.^m When the Council did meet again, it did not have the same order as before for there was no successor to the Kingdom — Emma apostatized and with her went her sons — Hyrum was dead, Samuel Smith had died, and William the Prophet's only surviving brother was unworthy. Thus the Council of the Twelve Apostles with Brigham Young as President of the Church absorbed the power of the Holy Order and the Council of Fifty. Ultimately the Fifty became nothing more than a rubber stamp for the Twelve and with the discontinuance of the practice of Adoption, the Patriarchal Order sank into oblivion.

Emma Smith, beloved first wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith and their son Joseph Smith III were the two people more responsible than any other living persons in this dispensation for the failure or loss of the Kingdom which had been the Prophet's lifelong ambition to bring forth. It was because of Emma's rebellion that the Patriarchal Priestesshood was lost to the women. If she would have followed in the Principles and Doctrines of her husband, her sons would have been raised as worthy heirs under the Law of the Fulness of the Priesthood. Yet in spite of all she suffered, all the sacrifices and privations she passed through for the Gospel's sake and for her husband, in the end, she married a total gentile and denied those Gospel values that were so endeared by the Prophet — the very ones that brought about his death. Her children were raised to despise the principles that God had revealed to their father, which were essential for their own exaltation. Joseph Smith

^lD&C 103:1–10; 104:18; 105:1–8; 119:5–6; 121:34–40; 124:45–48; 132:1–6; *JD* 9:269, 270; 18:244, 249; *TPBY* Vol. 3:375–377 ^mFor more information on President Brigham Young's consolidation of power see *Doctrine of the Priesthood*, Vol. 7, No. 10, "The Apostleship—Apostolic Succession and the Authority of the Quorum of the Twelve", also Vol. 8, No. 4, "Adoption: Law of the Kingdom, Forgotten Doctrine of Mormonism" p. 30–33.

III became the Mormon Church's most enthusiastic antagonist. He continually spoke and wrote against the saving and exalting principles his father espoused. The temple ordinances, the plurality of Gods, Plural Marriage, the Holy Order, the Council of Fifty, the Law of Adoption, the Adam-God doctrine — in short, all of the Nauvoo teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith became the lifelong object of his ridicule and scorn. Throughout his life, he interviewed hundreds of his father's friends, wives and associates — he himself had been witness to many things in his own home — surely he knew the truth about his father, yet in true lawyercraft style he spent his life misrepresenting the testimony of first hand witnesses to his father's teachings and thus deceiving all those over whom he had influence.

Because of the apostasy of Emma and her sons, the Church and Kingdom had no heir. The Saints waited for Joseph's children to come forth, but they never did. Thus the Patriarchal Order, the Holy Order of God was lost to the Saints and with it went the doctrines and ordinances which would have brought women into the Priesthood.

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